

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT INTERGOVERNMENTAL POLICY DIVISION

June 13, 2008

Members of the Continuing Legislative Committee on
State Planning and Development:

The Honorable Eric D. Coleman
The Honorable Art Feltman
The Honorable Jonathan A. Harris
The Honorable Leonard Fasano
The Honorable Craig A. Miner
The Honorable Joseph J. Crisco, Jr.
The Honorable Antonio (Tony) Guerrera
The Honorable Jack Malone
The Honorable Richard Roy

Dear Senators and Representatives:

In accordance with Section 16a-32 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) is providing notice to the Continuing Legislative Committee on State Planning and Development that it is in receipt of an application for an interim change to the Locational Guidemap of the *Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut, 2005-2010 (C&D Plan)*, submitted by the Town of Colchester. The applicant is requesting the reclassification of several parcels of land, located in proximity to State Route 11, currently designated as Rural Lands and Existing Preserved Open Space, to a Growth Area designation. The request is related to the Town's desire to direct growth to this area consistent with the Municipal Plan of Conservation and Development as well as local zoning regulations.

In accordance with the recent actions of the Legislative Regulation Review Committee, OPM is seeking written approval from the Continuing Committee prior to initiating this proposed revision to the C&D Plan.

If the Continuing Committee directs OPM to undertake the revision process, OPM will process the application in accordance with its regulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. David LeVasseur".

W. David LeVasseur, Undersecretary
Intergovernmental Policy Division

Attachment: Interim Change application, Town of Colchester

Linda M. Hodge



First Selectman

June 3, 2008
Hon. Robert Genuario
Secretary
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1379

Dear Secretary Genuario:

I am the First Selectman of Colchester and respectfully request a change to the Locational Guidemap for the Conservation and Development Policies Plan from the current designation of existing preserved open space to growth area for the parcels identified in this submittal.

We make this request based on the Towns Plan of Conservation and Development, the Goals and Policies of the State Plan of Conservation and Development and the nature of the properties generally.

The properties in question are several parcels adjacent to an entrance/exit ramp for State Road 11 including one that is State owned. The state owned parcel was almost totally excavated for materials that were used for the construction of State Road 11 and is heavily sloped downward away from State Rd 11. The state owned property has little or no environmental value in itself and is inaccessible to the public as it has no access.

The other five parcels are privately owned and not developed except for one housing unit. The properties contain some wetland areas in amounts and character similar to most Colchester property.

Consistent with smart growth policies, Colchester has focused expected new growth to the areas adjacent to major roadways and infrastructure. The Towns Plan of Conservation and Development and Zoning Map identify future development areas to the south of the existing downtown along State roadways Rt 2, 11, and 85 and Norwich and Lebanon Ave. In addition town sewer and water expansion is projected to serve only these locations over the next 15 years. These parcels requested for State re-designation on the Locational Guidemap for the Conservation and Development Policies Plan are included in Towns future development area.

The town's development strategy of focusing new development into appropriate areas adjacent to major roadways and existing infrastructure also preserves and protect other lands from intensive development. Colchester has been very active in agriculture enhancement/preservation as well as acquisition of open space and conservation lands. Indeed the community character of Colchester directly relates to the natural environment

This local development strategy is consistent with State Growth Management policies which encourage:

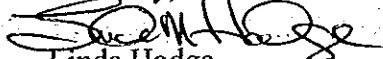
- Develop regional centers with existing and/or planned infrastructure
- Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to accommodate a variety of Types and Needs
- Concentrate Development Along Transportation Nodes
- Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment

In addition, the town is adopting mixed use development regulations for these areas which provide affordable housing and diverse housing opportunities. Finally the parcels in question are adjacent to other parcels designated for growth area in the State Plan.

We respectfully request that the parcels be designated for growth area so that they are consistent with the town's plans and can be fully integrated. There is no sprawl in our plans and we point out that this growth strategy is designed to channel growth along infrastructure and roads and protect the vast majority of lands in Colchester. While we are consistent with the State Plan in terms of policy we wish to achieve mapping consistency as well. We hope you will support our efforts to execute our growth management approach.

I and my staff thank you for your consideration and we remain open to answer questions and provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Linda Hodge
First Selectman

w/enclosure

Code Administration
Building Official
Fire Marshal
Wetlands Enforcement



Planning and Zoning
Planning Director
Zoning Enforcement
Town Engineer

June 6, 2008

Hon. Robert Genuario
Secretary
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1379

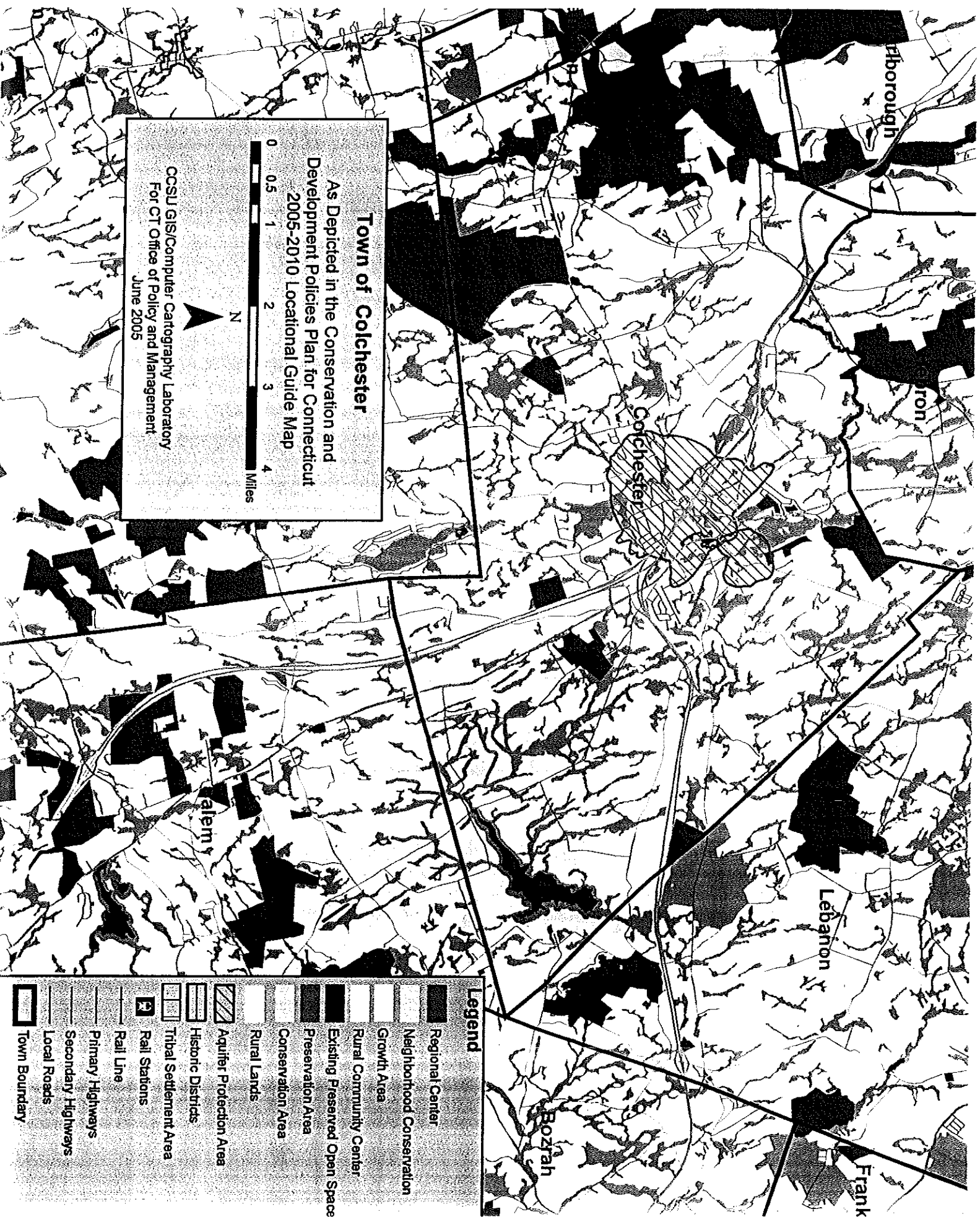
Dear Secretary Genuario:

I am the Chairman of the Colchester Planning and Zoning Commission and I do certify that the request for change to the Locational Guidemap for the Conservation and Development Policies Plan from the current designation of existing preserved open space to growth area for the parcels identified in this submittal is consistent with Towns Plan of Conservation and Development and the Towns Zoning Code.

Sincerely,


James Ford
Chairman

w/enclosure





HEBRON

LEBANON

EAST HADDAM

SALEM



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State Plan Policies



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Conservation and Development Policies Plan

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Plan Summary

[C&D Plan
Summary](#) [Locational
Guide Map](#) [Plan Adoption
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The Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut, 2005-2010 (C&D Plan) is comprised of two separate, yet equally important, components – the Plan text and the Locational Guide Map (see links below). Both components include policies that guide the planning and decision-making processes of state government relative to: (1) addressing human resource needs and development; (2) balancing economic growth with environmental protection and resource conservation concerns; and (3) coordinating the functional planning activities of state agencies to accomplish long-term effectiveness and economies in the expenditure of public funds.

The policies contained in the C&D Plan text provide the context and direction for state agencies to implement their plans and actions in a manner consistent with the following six Growth Management Principles (GMPs):

- 1) Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure
- 2) Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs
- 3) Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options
- 4) Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands

- 5) Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety
- 6) Promote Integrated Planning Across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis

Municipalities and Regional Planning Organizations must note any inconsistencies with the Growth Management Principles when developing their own plans of conservation and development.

The Locational Guide Map plays an important role in coordinating relevant state actions by providing a geographical interpretation of the state's conservation and development policies. The Map comprises the best available digital, standardized, statewide data for each policy's definitional criteria.

Development Area Policies (In order of priority)

- 1) Regional Centers – Redevelop and revitalize the economic, social, and physical environment of the state's traditional centers of industry and commerce.
- 2) Neighborhood Conservations Areas – Promote infill development and redevelopment in areas that are at least 80% built up and have existing water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure to support such development.
- 3) Growth Areas – Support staged urban-scale expansion in areas suitable for long-term economic growth that are currently less than 80% built up, but have existing or planned infrastructure to support future growth in the region.
- 4) Rural Community Centers – Promote concentration of mixed-use development such as municipal facilities, employment, shopping, and residential uses within a village center setting.

Conservation Area Policies (In order of priority)

- 1) Existing Preserved Open Space – Support the permanent protection of public and quasi-public land dedicated for open space purposes.
- 2) Preservation Areas – Protect significant resource, heritage, recreation, and hazard-prone areas by avoiding structural development, except as directly consistent with the preservation value.

3) Conservation Areas – Plan for the long-term management of lands that contribute to the state’s need for food, water and other resources and environmental quality by ensuring that any changes in use are compatible with the identified conservation value.

4) Rural Lands – Protect the rural character of these areas by avoiding development forms and intensities that exceed on-site carrying capacity for water supply and sewage disposal, except where necessary to resolve localized public health concerns.

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In accordance with Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) regulations, state agencies are required to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of any applicable action that might significantly affect the environment. An important requirement of this evaluation process is for the sponsoring agency to assess the consistency of its proposed action with the C&D Plan. After the sponsoring agency has taken into account all public and agency comments and made its final decision on the proposed action, OPM must make a determination as to whether the evaluation satisfies CEPA requirements.

The Locational Guide Map plays an important role in coordinating relevant state actions by providing a geographical interpretation of the state's conservation and development policies. The Map comprises the best available digital, standardized, statewide data for each policy's definitional criteria. If the criteria defining a particular site changes subsequent to the Plan's adoption, a proposed project should be judged for consistency based on the most current data sources available at the time of the evaluation.

In addition, the reuse or redevelopment of an existing site for economic development, affordable housing, or public-supported initiative may also be eligible for state funding, even if it is not located within a development category on the Map. A full CEPA review may be necessitated when the proposed redevelopment is of a greater intensity than the past use; thereby requiring a thorough analysis of all potential impacts and mitigation measures, as well as consideration of alternative sites within the region.

The Locational Guide Map comprises four development categories and four conservation categories that are prioritized according to their characteristics and suitability for various state actions. The policies associated with these categories reflect the Plan's different applications and impacts relative to an area's character of development, social structure, economic base, natural conditions, and public service facilities. *The Map is not intended to serve as a mirror image of all existing local development or zoning.* When a conservation priority is reflected on the Map in an area where development currently exists, the Plan text must be consulted to help interpret a proposed action's consistency.

The overall Plan strategy is to reinforce and conserve existing urban areas, to promote staged, appropriate, sustainable development, and to preserve areas of significant environmental value. Areas that have valued intrinsic qualities, perform useful natural functions, or have existing or potential value for significant public use need to be protected from degradation or inappropriate development. However, protecting the environment is not simply identifying areas where no growth should occur. In many cases, development is possible that is compatible with the basic environmental or renewable resource values or physical safety problems of the land.

The Locational Guide Map categories are assigned a relative priority value as follows:

Development Area Policies (In order of priority)

1) Regional Centers – Redevelop and revitalize the economic, social, and physical environment of the state's traditional centers of industry and commerce.

- 2) Neighborhood Conservations Areas – Promote infill development and redevelopment in areas that are at least 80% built up and have existing water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure to support such development.
- 3) Growth Areas – Support staged urban-scale expansion in areas suitable for long-term economic growth that are currently less than 80% built up, but have existing or planned infrastructure to support future growth in the region.
- 4) Rural Community Centers – Promote concentration of mixed-use development such as municipal facilities, employment, shopping, and residential uses within a village center setting.

Conservation Area Policies (In order of priority)

- 1) Existing Preserved Open Space – Support the permanent protection of public and quasi-public land dedicated for open space purposes.
- 2) Preservation Areas – Protect significant resource, heritage, recreation, and hazard-prone areas by avoiding structural development, except as directly consistent with the preservation value.
- 3) Conservation Areas – Plan for the long-term management of lands that contribute to the state's need for food, fiber, water and other resources and environmental quality by ensuring that any changes in use are compatible with the identified conservation value.
- 4) Rural Lands – Protect the rural character of these areas by avoiding development forms and intensities that exceed on-site carrying capacity for water supply and sewage disposal, except where necessary to resolve localized public health concerns.

The following is an attempt to clarify a number of Map issues, so that the state's intended policies are better understood:

- 1) The term "Neighborhood Conservation Area (NCA)" refers to the state's #2 *development* priority after Regional Centers. NCAs can entail a wide variety of development, such as commercial, industrial, and/or urban-scale density residential land uses. The overall intent of this policy is to maintain the overall character and vitality of the area by promoting infill development and maximum use of existing infrastructure.
- 2) Aquifer Protection Areas (APA) and Historic Areas appear as crosshatched overlays on the Map, but they are defined and treated as Conservation Areas.
 - An APA represents the defined recharge area of a major public water supply well. Such areas are shown as overlays because Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulations place certain limits on land uses within the APA. Any development actions in an APA, regardless of public or private financing, must conform to APA standards.
 - Historic Areas include Local Historic Districts, as defined in state statute, as well as National Register Historic Districts. Historic Areas are shown on the Map as an overlay because any development in these areas must be in accordance with any guidelines or standards established for the district. The state lacks boundary data for the vast majority of National Register Historic Districts, so these areas do

not appear on the Map. This absence does not alter their treatment as a Conservation Area on a project-specific basis.

- 3) Floodways and coastal wave hazard areas are represented on the map as Preservation Areas, while the remaining 100-year river and coastal floodplains are shown as Conservation Areas. Given the public's continued attraction to rivers and the coastline, many of the state's flood hazard areas experience intensive commercial and industrial development. The Plan does not prohibit the continuation or the modification of these land uses. The Conservation Area designation is a red flag denoting that future actions must be consistent with the flood management objectives for such an area.
- 4) Public drinking water supply watersheds cover large areas of the state. These lands provide a valuable public health function by protecting reservoirs from polluted runoff and by ensuring a clean and safe drinking water supply. Because these lands are vast in size, there are many instances where development has occurred within the watershed. The state's policy in public drinking water supply watersheds is to discourage the introduction of infrastructure for the purpose of accommodating new development. Exceptions may be allowed in certain instances where development has already occurred, and added pollution controls are required to protect potable waters.
- 5) Class I utility owned lands are defined and treated as Existing Preserved Open Space. However, since there is no statewide mapping available for Class I lands, they are not reflected on the Map. This absence does not alter their treatment as Existing Preserved Open Space on a project-specific basis.
- 6) Finally, the entire Existing Preserved Open Space inventory is currently being updated by DEP. The data reflected on the Map will be superseded once this inventory process is complete.

Plan Adoption and Revision

The Office of Policy and Management integrates the Plan into the Office's planning and coordinating functions as closely as possible. The Plan is used as a framework for evaluating plans and proposals submitted to OPM for review through mandated review processes (e.g., Intergovernmental Review System, Municipal Development Program, Environmental Impact Reporting). OPM advises an initiating agency, when appropriate, on how well individual plans or projects relate to the Plan. In addition, regional planning organizations and municipalities are encouraged to use the Plan and, in fact, must note any inconsistencies with the Plan when developing their local Plans of Conservation and Development.

Section 16a-28 of the Connecticut General Statutes sets forth a recurring five-year cycle for the preparation, legislative committee review, and public hearings that precede full

Similarly, low-density development increases the per capita cost to extend road and sewer infrastructure to widely dispersed areas, and to provide school transportation and police and fire protection to these areas. Moderate to high-density development, on the other hand, can help limit per capita costs by maximizing the use of existing infrastructure capacity and by having a more concentrated public service area.

Blue Ribbon Commission on Property Tax Burdens and Smart Growth Incentives

The proliferation of fiscal zoning practices is an integral factor behind the creation of the state's *Blue Ribbon Commission on Property Tax Burdens and Smart Growth Incentives* (the Commission), created by Special Act No. 02-13 in June 2002. The Commission comprises a number of chief elected officials, town managers and others appointed by the Governor and Leadership of the General Assembly, the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) and the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), as well as representatives of business, labor, and the state. The Commission's report is intended to stir debate over possible changes to the state's tax structure to reduce municipalities' reliance on property taxes, while promoting incentive-based approaches for encouraging municipalities to develop and conserve their land in a manner that serves the long-term needs of the community and the region.

Although "smart growth" can mean different things to different people, the Commission generally defines the term as "a comprehensive planning process that encourages patterns of development that can accommodate and sustain economic growth while at the same time limiting sprawl, reducing transportation congestion, protecting natural resources, preserving the traditional character of communities and ensuring equitable access to affordable housing, jobs and community services."

The Commission suggests that public debate of these issues can be enhanced through improved data sharing and planning tools, such as a coordinated statewide geographic information system (GIS) database, a statewide build-out analyses, and an evaluation of the public costs associated with alternate patterns of development. This GIS database would comprise the most up-to-date digital information on existing infrastructure and natural resources, and would enable exchanges between state, regional and local decision-makers. The build-out analysis would provide a visual projection of what the state might look like if development patterns were to continue under existing land use regulations. The build-out analysis should also be tested for sensitivity to the state's surface and groundwater resources, transportation systems, and sewer plans to determine how these resources should be managed to accommodate projected development.

Although the reports summarized above were commissioned by largely disparate groups, they tend to share a common theme: Current patterns of development in Connecticut are not sustainable; and cities, suburbs, and rural communities are impacted in different ways that make the provision of municipal services increasingly inefficient and expensive, and contribute to a host of socio-economic and environmental challenges. Moving forward, how we deal with these challenges will have profound impacts on the state in terms of its ability to compete in the national and global economy, and on the quality of life that we seek in our hometowns. Connecticut is, indeed, at a crossroads.

school systems, and have commercial amenities close to home. If urban centers and their associated neighborhoods are unable to provide these attributes, growth will continue to take place in an outward direction at our urban boundaries. The alternative is not mandated stagnation and a reduction of development, but a more planned and fuller use of already developed areas. Creating quality urban environments and offering stable livable neighborhoods will help attract people and development inward to built up areas in existing communities, where infrastructure is already in place (already built environment).

- **Policy:** Focus urban design to help old and new neighborhoods to function by mixing housing types and land uses, creating meaningful central places, and introducing new forms of open space. These communities should be distinguished by attractive design, and a diversity of people, places, open space, recreational opportunities, transportation options and economic opportunity.
 - Plan for compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development patterns and land reuse, and promoting such patterns and reuse.
 - Provide a broad range of choice among housing types, designs and costs to meet diverse individual family needs for each community in locations convenient to other activities and existing facilities.
 - Provide attractive neighborhoods with mixed-use development adjacent to transit stops to create a sense of place and build the critical population mass to support the transit system.
 - Focus land use patterns inward, utilizing existing infrastructure to build on the community's assets.
 - Encourage development on a scale that promotes street level activity to maximize sense of neighborhood and encourage pedestrian activity.
 - Consider expanding local authority to regulate aesthetics such as orientation of building entrances, amount of window space, and facade treatments.
 - Planning for urban neighborhoods must incorporate clearly distinguishable boundaries such as common streetscape, similarity of architecture, landmark structures or landmark public spaces and appropriate signage to create a sense of cohesion.
 - Promote infill housing and address land use regulations to insure infill development is at the proper scale and density to maintain or improve the character of the neighborhood.

- Transportation planning must make downtown areas accessible and create intra-neighborhood accessibility.
- Link affordable housing land use planning objectives with transportation systems planning.
- Integrate downtown and main street areas with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Community groups and governmental leaders must be engaged in order to help create, or in some cases, re-create a sense of community.
- Investigate and develop new design practices and principles that promote sustainable compact urban design and development.
- Utilize greenways to link together residential and recreation areas, schools and community centers, protect existing trail and greenway corridors and encourage new linkages as development occurs.

B. Infrastructure

Connecticut's existing infrastructure systems should be viewed as the building block for continued development in the state. State, regional and local policy should promote the maintenance and improvement of existing infrastructure systems and development in the areas where such infrastructure already exists. Infrastructure support in urban centers, transportation corridors and growth areas is necessary to attract and support investment in those areas and to reverse development patterns resulting in sprawl. Promoting development in areas with existing infrastructure saves taxpayer dollars and makes both public and private investment more cost effective.

The state, municipalities and private sector must focus on creating a physical environment in urban areas that enables development to take place as well as providing the necessary support to maintain stable first ring suburban neighborhoods. The state must target funding for water, sewer, road improvement, housing and economic development and to improve or maintain other existing infrastructure where appropriate and withhold such support in those areas where it is not appropriate. The first step in realizing the vision of living urban communities that sustain human and financial capital is to ensure that the existing infrastructure can support redevelopment. Areas that have been abandoned, where buildings and infrastructure have deteriorated, need to be targeted and support needs to be extended to communities that are experiencing the fiscal strain of maintaining older infrastructure systems. Subsequent redevelopment and private infrastructure improvement in these areas will serve to create the fiscal climate to sustain growth in these communities.

- **Policy:** Support existing communities and neighborhoods by targeting state resources to support infrastructure improvement and development in areas where the infrastructure is already in place.
 - Encourage fuller use of already developed places with existing infrastructure, particularly deteriorated areas where site abandonment or neglect are responsible for lack of investment, job loss and neighborhood flight.
 - Support maintenance or improvements to infrastructure systems that are experiencing deterioration in first ring suburban neighborhoods and mature suburbs.
 - Encourage innovative programs that assist homeowners in urban centers, and mature neighborhoods to maintain the quality of aging housing stock.
 - Balance the full environmental, social, and economic costs and benefits of new development, including infrastructure costs such as transportation, sewers and wastewater treatment, water supply, stormwater quality and quantity control, schools, recreation and open space and project benefits such as job creation, brownfield redevelopment and impact on local tax base.
 - Focus on improvement of existing infrastructure to support redevelopment and infill, and discourage intensive development in rural areas not already supported by local infrastructure, or where development is not consistent with state, regional and local land use policy.
 - Protect stable neighborhoods and extend their useful life through continuous upgrading.
 - Support communities to effectively develop long term growth strategies which will promote meeting economic and housing needs within a planned infrastructure framework.

Energy:

The State of Connecticut imports most of its current energy supply, including oil, coal, natural gas and uranium. In addition, the state continues to be particularly dependent on oil, which is generally imported from foreign countries. These markets are now commodity driven, and this creates a significant continuing risk of economic disruption from sudden cost escalation or supply interruption, conditions over which we have little or no control.

Energy supply and pricing have a substantial influence on economic growth within the State of Connecticut, particularly in the industrial sector. Energy prices in New England

Efforts to revitalize the state's regional centers and neighborhoods must take advantage of the existing assets in these areas as well as create new opportunities. This includes utilizing existing infrastructure as discussed above, and creating other incentives to make urban development more attractive. Issues pertaining to zoning, building code and regulatory review processes must be addressed at the proper state, local and regional level to help streamline urban revitalization efforts while insuring that appropriate development, reuse and revitalization occurs.

- **Policy:** Revitalize the state's regional centers and neighborhoods by investing wisely and sufficiently in improvements to their human resources and infrastructure systems to attract private investment. Promote reutilization of older and vacant buildings for mixed-income housing, mixed-use development, commercial and industrial development, as well as infill development on available urban property.
 - Create incentive-based priming of the urban housing market through strategically targeted housing development to create additional investment opportunities in urban housing markets.
 - Create incentive-based priming of urban commercial and mixed-use real estate market with targeted commercial projects in order to create possibilities for private developers.
 - Pursuant to Section 8 of Public Act 03-184 continue the ongoing efforts of the Office of the State Building Inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee to establish a building sub-code that applies specifically to building rehabilitation rather than new construction.
 - Review zoning requirements at the local level for modifications to allow for density bonuses for mixed income housing rehabilitation projects.
 - Consider pre-approved development areas to promote certain uses and streamline regulatory approval process.
 - Support local communities that develop strategic plans for neighborhood revitalization.
 - Pursue opportunities to link revitalized areas, particularly in river corridors, to trail and greenway projects.

Brownfield Redevelopment:

Because of Connecticut's historically industrial dependent economy, and the number of brownfields sites existing in the state's development areas, brownfields redevelopment is a key element in urban revitalization efforts. Brownfields are properties that have real or perceived environmental contamination, which adds additional risk to redevelopment.

neighborhoods) can assist prospective homebuyers in purchasing and renovating homes in need of repair, and should be developed and encouraged.

- **Policy:** Seek to increase rehabilitation efforts for historic structures and older homes in development areas.
 - As permitted by fiscal ability, re-fund the Urban Rehabilitation Homeownership Program to meet demand for this program.
 - Continue to encourage municipalities to develop historic inventory surveys to list homes that are on the State and National Register of Historic Places, and to identify older neighborhoods with buildings more than fifty years old that retain architectural integrity and illustrate a period in town history.
 - The state and municipalities should promote outreach efforts and provide technical assistance for homeowners interested in applying for state or national historic designation and the Historic Homes Rehabilitative Tax Credit program.
 - Continue and promote outreach and education efforts, as currently performed by the Office of the State Building Inspector, for property owners regarding Section 29-259 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and Chapter 34 of the Connecticut State Building Code, allowing for certain code waivers for the rehabilitation of historic structures.
 - Explore and develop options and strategies to enhance the use of tax credits by homeowners for rehabilitation of aging housing stock.

Main Street Development:

Many towns and cities in Connecticut have traditional town centers that are in varying states of economic health. Some are popular, attract investment and continue to be centers for economic and community life. Other town centers have difficulty attracting investment are plagued with vacant storefronts and are in a state of disrepair. Revitalization of these main street areas is important not only because they are usually the historical, cultural, civic and geographical center of the community, but because they are also an alternative to the forces that fuel low-density development at the fringe of growth areas. A revitalized main street can accommodate compact, mixed-use, pedestrian oriented development. Higher density development with a mix of commercial and residential uses can create a variety of housing and transit opportunities. Revitalization strategy must take advantage of existing main street assets and build on historic architecture, a traditional town center sense of place, pedestrian friendly safe walking environment and the opportunity for unique business development in order to provide an alternative to “big-box” and mall shopping.

- **Policy:** Focus resources to promote and encourage the revitalization and reuse of town center main streets in rural community centers, regional centers and older suburban towns.
- Municipalities should review and enact zoning regulations that are conducive to development of the town center environment.
 - Municipalities need to identify and build on a market niche for the main street area.
 - Municipalities should engage local civic groups, the local business community and local colleges, universities and hospitals when assessing, planning for and marketing the future of main street areas.
 - Identify and promote cultural and historical attractions.
 - Promote economic development in the context of historic preservation.
 - The state should continue to fund the Connecticut Main Street Center through the Department of Economic and Community Development.
 - The state should encourage the use of funds from quasi-public and private agencies to encourage business startups in these areas.
 - Encourage the linkage of main streets to trail and greenway development wherever possible.

D. Economic Development

Attracting and maintaining suitable economic development is a critical aspect in the creation of revitalized sustainable communities in Connecticut. The competitive advantages of Connecticut's urban areas must be promoted in order to achieve development patterns that focus investment in areas with established infrastructure and away from expansion at the urban fringe.

Planning for economic growth needs to be comprehensive and incorporate not only business development, but housing, transportation, recreation and public safety in order to create desirable, attractive, urban communities that will sustain and grow economic opportunity. Public resources need to be targeted in an efficient and effective manner to prime urban areas for sustainable private development. The state, regional and municipal authorities, must be creative in utilizing scarce resources to maximize private investment in urban economic development. The state should continue to encourage vigorous economic development in the state's urban centers, however these activities must be tempered by the reality that market forces have an impact on the selection of site locations for businesses.

and community values, while creating opportunities for diverse income groups. Other areas will require strategies to promote compatible infill or to expand low and moderate-income housing opportunities through either new construction or through rehabilitation of substandard housing. Still other areas with severe deterioration of housing will require a focus on neighborhood revitalization strategies that cut across human service, health and safety, economic development, transportation and housing disciplines. Planning will need to address the need for mixed income, mixed use, transit oriented housing development on a regional basis to create housing, and employment mobility.

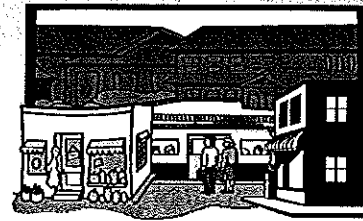
Community development planning needs to take a multi-disciplined approach in order to address the many facets involved in sustainable urban revitalization and housing mobility. It is necessary to integrate planning for affordable housing across disciplines in order to encourage investment in cities and promote economically diverse urban centers, as well as create incentives for affordable housing in areas that are underserved. Policies must be directed toward building capacity and critical mass in order for all areas to be economically vibrant and sustainable. The development of mixed-income housing and housing choice is a first step to community development and creates opportunity, residential stability, public order, and confidence. Housing should be seen as a building block to create the necessary critical mass to support neighborhood business opportunities and sustainable quality communities.

- **Policy:** Promote housing mobility and choice across income levels utilizing current infrastructure and the preservation of existing residential neighborhoods and housing stock.
 - Study regional housing cost patterns and zoning practices and establish regional plans to address and promote affordable fair-share housing and inclusionary housing policies.
 - Encourage planning for affordable housing on a regional basis to provide choice across income levels, proximity to employment and greater opportunity to develop income diverse neighborhoods in urban and suburban areas.
 - State funded programs for affordable housing development and homeownership should be implemented, when and where appropriate, in a manner that is consistent with the growth management policies in this Plan of Conservation and Development
 - The State should encourage regular contact among government agencies and housing providers to tailor housing, job training, transportation access and economic development resources to meet community needs, and be cost effective.
 - Invest in the maintenance of existing publicly assisted rental housing stock to preserve it as a long-term resource.

- Continue to encourage and support existing incentives as well as to encourage the development of local initiatives for the promotion of homeownership opportunities in regional centers where homeownership rates lag far behind.
- Provide favorable loan terms for multifamily housing and mixed-use properties in targeted areas.
- Market urban communities to certain niche populations more likely to move back to urban environments such as young people and empty nesters
- Support local efforts to develop appropriate urban infill housing to make better use of limited urban land.
- Continue to support incentive based priming of housing markets through strategically targeted housing development to create additional investment opportunities in those areas.
- Support adaptive reuse of historic structures for use as residential housing.
- The state should promote support for mixed-income developments in areas that currently under-serve low and moderate-income households.
- Study existing zoning regulations to determine if they provide realistic opportunities for development of multifamily dwellings and low and moderate-income housing where needed.
- Study the need for and impact of developing model zoning regulations that encourage housing opportunities for multifamily dwellings and promote housing for low and moderate-income households.
- The state should consider strengthening language in CGS 8-2, or a new section, to define inclusive zoning policy and require municipalities to adopt zoning regulations that adhere to this policy.
- On a regional basis, the need for equitable housing choice and mobility should be addressed to promote fair share affordable housing across municipalities.
- The state should consider giving regions and/or municipalities that meet affordable housing thresholds priority for open space funding or other incentives.
- Encourage interaction of civic groups, local political, religious and community leaders in order to build a sense of community.

Growth Management Principle #3

Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options



Transportation planning, to provide safe, efficient and cost-effective movement of people and goods, is primarily a state and regional responsibility. Municipalities are responsible for planning and regulating land use development within their borders. The lack of integration between these two planning functions has had a cumulative effect on unintended development and the inefficient use of transportation resources.

Over the past several decades, population migration from cities to suburbs has made it increasingly difficult and expensive to accommodate society's demand for mobility. As land use patterns change, the transportation system is faced with new demands in certain areas while other areas are left with underutilized capacity. The effort and cost to just maintain this expansive network, limits the state's ability to be responsive to all of the deficiencies in the transportation system.

Today's suburban communities are characterized by their low-density, single use patterns of development that seldom support any form of transportation other than the automobile. Commuting patterns that traditionally involved a central hub now often cut across regions from suburb to suburb. Highway-accessible shopping malls, corporate offices, and industrial complexes have drawn considerable retail and employment away from regional centers, further limiting public transportation's ability to be responsive to the convoluted travel demands. As a result, suburban arterial roadways are forced to handle significantly more traffic than they were designed to accommodate.

Past experience confirms that the state cannot build its way out of congestion, as short-term improvements in highway expansion often exacerbate development pressures at the suburban fringe. The solution requires a consistent, long-term approach to match land development with the ability of the transportation network to provide an acceptable level of mobility. There is no silver bullet that can cure congestion, but transportation options can become viable over time as more concentrated land use patterns emerge through

evaluate their routes and stops to ensure that areas with high density, mixed uses, and pedestrian access are well served by transit.

- **Policy:** Promote compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed use development patterns around public transportation stations and along public transportation corridors.
 - Encourage affected municipalities to enact transit supportive zoning regulations within ¼ mile of an existing or proposed transit station. Such regulations should be developed with assistance from the respective regional planning organization (RPO) and have consensus among the community regarding specific density and design standards. ConnDOT should concur with the regulations before any related capital project is approved for funding.
 - Provide incentives for developers to invest in projects that complement both the community development goals within the transit corridor and the transit system operation, such as pre-approved development areas and density bonuses for protecting open space.
 - Provide incentives for individuals to live within walking distance to public transportation facilities through strategies such as location efficient mortgages that allow the mortgage applicant to apply more income toward the monthly mortgage payment as a result of lower monthly personal transportation costs. Employers are also encouraged to provide housing or public transportation incentives for employees who live near their jobs and/or use public transportation.
 - Provide state tax incentives for businesses that locate in areas accessible to public transportation facilities, such as Connecticut's Inner City Business Strategy discussed on page 26.
 - Emphasize clustering of mixed-use, mixed-income development in pedestrian friendly villages to reduce the number of automobile trips, especially in Rural Community Centers where public transportation may not be available.
 - Encourage an appropriate mix of services near transit stations that accommodate the needs of working families and the transit dependent.
 - Provide a network of pedestrian and bicycle paths and greenways that are safe and provide convenient access to the transit system. Wherever possible, the transit system should try to accommodate bike transport or provide appropriate storage facilities at the station. Vehicle operator awareness programs pertaining to bicycle and pedestrian safety should also be promoted around transit corridors.

- enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources; and
 - practice conservation in the use of energy, maximize the use of energy efficient systems, and minimize the environmental impact of energy production and use."
-(C.G.S. Section 22a-1a(b)).

Connecticut has a strong history of protecting the environment. It has strict anti-pollution laws as well as statutory and regulatory protections for important natural resources. State, municipal and private agencies and organizations have set aside irreplaceable scenic and recreational resources. Regulatory programs afford protection to specific resources such as wetlands and floodplains. Yet, the scope and intricacies of regulation and the limits on the ability to compete with development in setting aside land leaves an undesirable margin for environmental degradation. To maintain this diversity and natural heritage, it is necessary to protect the functional integrity of critical wildlife habitats and important natural resource systems such as watersheds, ridgelines, large forest areas, and Long Island Sound. Identifying and protecting these larger systems must be a major focus of future public and private conservation and development planning efforts.

While economic and social forces shape much of the quality of urban life, the natural environment is an important amenity often in short supply in the cities. Cities also hold many of our cultural and historical resources of greatest value. Preserving and celebrating these resources while enabling sorely needed economic and social revitalization is a vital concern.

Recognizing and avoiding impacts to environmentally sensitive areas not only offers protection but is generally much more cost-effective than attempting to clean up or mitigate impacts after the fact. This does not mean halting all development in all areas, but it does involve careful attention to ensure that the resources of concern are not harmed.

A. Open Spaces

Existing Preserved Open Spaces:

Existing Preserved Open Spaces are places protected by public or quasi-public ownership. (Refer to the back of the Locational Guide Map for more concise definition of this category). They represent a commitment and investment of past generations to set aside areas that range from intensively used public beaches and playgrounds to natural preserves with highly controlled public access. Continued maintenance of these open spaces is a high priority of the state.

- **Policy:** Continue to protect Existing Preserved Open Space areas and to limit improvements to those consistent with long-term preservation and appropriate public enjoyment of the natural resource and open space values of the site.

- Encourage public use in conformance with management plans that foster long-range, multi-purpose usage;
- Approve actions not consistent with long-term preservation only when it is demonstrated that there are overriding social, economic, and public benefits and there are no feasible alternatives; and
- Manage public trust lands to ensure their long-term preservation, the viability of their natural ecological processes, and availability to the public.

Preserved Open Space Objectives:

It is a goal of the state to have at least 10% of Connecticut's land area (320,576 acres) owned by the state as open space for the beneficial use and enjoyment of the public as additions to the state's system of parks, forests, wildlife, fisheries and natural resources management areas. It is also a goal of the state to assist municipalities, private non-profit organizations, and water utilities to preserve an additional 11% of the state's land area (352,634 acres) for a total of 21% of the state's land preserved as open space by the year 2023 (Connecticut General Statutes Section 23-8(b)). *The Connecticut Green Plan: Open Space Acquisition for Fiscal Years 2001-2006* recommends the types of lands that should be acquired.

- **Policy:** Provide a system of appropriately managed natural areas with a diversity of well-functioning habitats, and a wide variety of high quality outdoor recreational opportunities to all citizens, emphasizing activities that broaden understanding of and contact with the natural environment. Assess statewide needs for recreational resources and facilities. Develop management plans that maximize multiple uses of state-owned lands, and encourage collaborative ventures with municipal and private entities to provide, protect, and manage recreation and habitat lands, emphasizing:
 - Continued support for state acquisition or state assisted acquisition of open space lands for natural resource protection to meet the overall statutory goal of preserving 21% of the state's area, while seeking to define an appropriate resource-based goal for protected acreage;
 - New water-based recreation sites that are consistent with other resource protection requirements;
 - Access to Long Island Sound shoreline areas of highest recreational potential, with recommendations for state-first option for purchase, lease-back, easements, and other incentives to maintain and increase public access to coastal areas, or to acquire through emergency purchase high-hazard coastal areas;

consistent with source protection and where there is adequate oversight.

- Maintain all Class I water utility-owned lands through Department of Public Health regulation of sale and use, and maintain all similar lands that are currently in state ownership as open space.
- Prevent state funding of projects on lands that conform to Class I criteria that are incompatible with Class I regulations for surface water supplies because they create subsurface sewage disposal systems, create an intentional or unintentional point or non-point source of contamination, or permanently disturb ground vegetation except as appropriate for watershed, forest, or recreation purposes;
- Encourage new land uses within existing and potential public water supply watersheds and aquifers that are compatible with and operate in accordance with appropriate preservation and protection management strategies. Guide intensive development away from existing and potential water supply watersheds and aquifers and consider the cumulative effects of incremental growth in state, regional, and local planning programs and regulations.
- Maintain inventories and establish monitoring and inspection programs for high risk activities with the potential to threaten or adversely impact drinking water sources including: sites and areas prone to erosion and sedimentation control, underground fuel storage tanks, fertilizer and pesticide usage, drinking water sources lacking minimum setback distances, sites and areas with inadequate stormwater management measures, nonresidential development, and improper road salt storage and application, waste handling, and hazardous materials storage. Coordinate water utility and land use commission oversight through water utility surveys and water utility reviews and comment on land use proposals that may cause pollution.
- Maintain vigilance to ensure that existing, potentially threatening land uses do not harm community water systems in the future by continuing implementation of the Source Water Assessment Program to facilitate:
 - Tracking of existing or potential contaminant sources,
 - Formulating individual and regional drinking water source protection plans,
 - Guiding local commissions in the siting of development projects in sensitive areas,
 - Prioritizing source water area inspections, and
 - Coordinating water utility and land use commission oversight through water utility survey and water utility review and comments on land proposals that may cause pollution

- Evaluate regional and municipal plans of conservation and development and municipal zoning regulations to promote protective measures with the most stringent measures focused on critical areas, which are those closest to either a reservoir or diversion and its tributaries or a well field. Permit land use types and intensities that do not require sewer service. Design and manage land uses so that any waste discharges are treated completely on-site without contamination of ground or surface waters. Minimize site disturbance and utilize a site's characteristics for development through the use of cluster zoning, open space, conservation easements, or similar techniques. Continue to build stewardship and a conservation ethic in communities to protect and improve water quantity and quality.
- Avoid sewage collection systems except when essential to solve existing area-wide problems, limit state funding to a level necessary to solve pollution problems associated with existing development to avoid further intensive development on the watershed or aquifer. Disapprove plans for facilities that are excessively sized or that extend to areas where alternative remedial measures are possible.
- Continue to prohibit the disposal of domestic wastewater into existing and potential surface drinking water supply sources and consider wastewater receiving streams only for water supply during emergencies and only when appropriately treated or approved by the Commissioner of Public Health.
- Continue to implement the Aquifer Protection Areas Program to achieve Level A mapping for all existing and potential well fields and to bring into conformance all land uses with state and locally adopted land use regulations. Promote the adoption of model land use regulations and implementation at the local level of aquifer protection programs.
- Site, design, install, operate, maintain, repair, and renovate septic systems to function indefinitely and thus avoid the need to install sewers.
- As a general density guideline for water supply watersheds, require minimum lot sizes of one dwelling unit per two acres of "buildable" area (excludes wetlands). Consistent with the carrying capacity of the land, encourage cluster-style development to lessen impervious surfaces and avoid development in more sensitive areas.
- Encourage municipalities to enact local ordinances that require septic tanks to be inspected every three to five years and pumped out as needed.
- Through public education for septic system users, reduce disposal of materials that could threaten system operations and water quality.

Town Plan/Zoning Policies

Plan – Priority of Action

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

	Page	ZPC	CC	BOS	Town	Other
Establish Economic Development Focal Points in Village Centers						
• Maintain and enhance the role of the Town Center as the business, government and cultural center of the Town.	76					EDC
• Establish Westchester as a village center and a secondary focal point in Colchester.	76					
• Continue to encourage mixed uses that complement community character and add activity and stability to each village center.	76					
• Consider village district zoning (as allowed in Public Act 00-145) for one or both of these areas.	76	2				
Establish Economic Development Focal Points in Other Appropriate Locations						
• Establish an economic development focal point near the confluence of Routes 2 and 11.	76					
• Consider establishing an economic development focal point at Exit 17 of Route 2.	76					
• Create a Business Park zone to encourage development of high quality campus-style developments that will help diversify the Town's economic base.	76	1				
• Establish a Business Park zone near the junction of Routes 2 and 11, and at exit 17 of Route 2	76	1				
• For each zoning district, consider requiring a Special Exception for larger developments to ensure community impacts are adequately considered.	76	1				
Consider Eliminating Some Other Business & Industrial Zones						
• Modify the business and industrial zoning pattern to meet community needs and be compatible with the desired overall community structure.	77	2				
• Consider rezoning business and industrial zones outside of the areas recommended in the Plan to other uses.	77	2				

Growth Boundary

